
LINGUISTIC HETEROGENEITY AND CULTURAL PLURALISM: RECENT TRENDS IN SOUTH ASIAN LITERATURE

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Abstract

The paper is an attempt to identify the Linguistic Heterogeneity and Cultural Pluralism prevail in the society which also reflects in the South Asian Literary texts. The study is grounded in literature and literary studies emerged after the 1950s. Globalization has paved way for many positive as well as negative impacts in literature and literary studies. Globalization's one constructive note is Postmodernism which in turn laid the foundations for heterogeneity and pluralism efficaciously in society. South Asian Literary texts challenge the western postmodern texts and at the same time, it also unveils the pluralistic qualities through characterization, representation of society, the composition of texts, narrative discourse, etc. The paper deals with such heterogeneous aspects found in the literature after globalization limiting to literature produced by South Asia.

Keywords: *heterogeneity, pluralism, postmodern, globalization*

Linguistic Heterogeneity is a key terminology used in language studies as well as cultural anthropology to denote the different dialects found in a specific region or different languages found in a given geographical location. South Asian literature produced after the two world wars is considered to be the texts which reflect this linguistic heterogeneity as a counter against western English texts to challenge the western literary canon. Literature produced by the non-western people in English is the first to take for analysis, or even considered par with the western literature. In order to challenge the western canonical texts and to get rid of the western notion of looking at the east as inferior literature, writers from the southern part of Asia after the world wars resorted to writing in their native language. The South Asian writers took up the same road what Ngugi Wa Thiongo or Chinua Achebe took. Moreover, languages in South Asia are diverse in nature thereby the literature produced by these writers are also in diverse languages. They do not write only in English or Sanskrit, the languages through which the standard literature are produced at that time. But, writers hailing from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Maldives, and Afghanistan started writing in their mother tongue. Indian literature alone is written in more than ten languages such as in Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Maithili, Bengali, Urdu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Telugu, etc. Noted writer, K. Satchidanandan says while talking about South Asian Literature that "The use of Colloquialism is rising.

Bangladeshi literature is written in Bengali language and often it gets translated into English. Rabindranath Tagore's poem was translated into English and he is still celebrated because he is the first Asian Nobel Laureate. Recent trends in Bangladeshi literature is that it received a warm response for the recent movement named 'The Hungryalist movement'. Linguistic Heterogeneity is found explicitly in Bangladeshi Literature and the notable fact is that 'The Prakashana Movement' in the Bangladeshi literary circle is widely acclaimed and an appreciated one. It is also considered to be the only bilingual avant-garde literary movement in the literary arena.

Indian literature also promotes spirituality, moral values, and patriotism among the readers through the representation of trans-culturalism in the texts. Transculturalism is defined by Lewis Jeff as "... Share their stories, symbols, values, meanings, and experiences. Indian literature also has several regional produced literature with respect to the Flora and Fauna of a specific socio-cultural space. For example, Tamil literature talks about and shares the same characteristics when it comes to writing with regard to a specific region. Mountainous Region, Forests, Cropland, Seashore, and Mixture of Forests and Mountains. Similarly, literature from Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra, Orissa, Assam, Maharashtra, Kashmir, Punjab, Gujarat, etc. shares the same kind of characteristics to which their region is associated with. The notion of trans-culturalism is finding abundant in South Asian literature especially in Indian Literature. In addition to this, Indian literature often talks about trans-culturalism in a way that India is itself a multi-ethnic state. Diverse cultures, practices, beliefs, languages, religion, way of worship are all united to name as a single nation like India. Literature produced by India also shares the same kind of diversity in cultures, thus making it a transcultural nation.

Transculturalism is a counter against multiculturalism emerged very recently as a discipline of study in the Cultural Studies spectrum. It breaks down the boundaries of culture in a multi-ethnic state, thereby making all the cultures integrate to form a new culture which itself inherits the borrowed qualities of several cultures. People living in a transcultural state do not conform to a specific culture rather they accept anything and everything that comes in their way. This kind of trans-culturalism is a phenomenon found only in the postmodern society particularly after the word globalization put into action. Globalization paved way for people and culture not to conform to their own beliefs and practices instead globalization makes people from different geographical locations to connect and communicate with each other. This resulted in people finding several cultures all over the world and started to step down from the notion that one's culture is superior. Finding several cultures out there, they started to respect each culture and people from each culture. Transculturalism in this way predominantly occupied a space in contemporary society and contemporary literature. Foucault's view on this kind of pluralistic state culture is evidently seen from his comment on *Oedipus*, "Prefer what is positive and multiple, the difference over uniformity, flows over unities, mobile arrangements over systems. (Ballantyne, 37).

South Asian literature reflect the notion of trans-culturalism prevalent in society by representing characters from different cultures in a single narrative. Writers set their works' backdrop in a particular region, where people from several cultures live harmoniously. Previously, writers used to portray the identity crises people undergo in a multi-ethnic state. Diasporic writers often fall into talking about the identity crises which they experience in the settled region. Now, writers

tend to portray the harmonious relationships between people from different cultures living in a single space. South Asian writers and literature produced by them are prevalent in portraying this kind of linguistic heterogeneity and trans-culturalism in their texts. South Asian literature also share the same in their literary production.

Nepali people also migrated to several other places in the world, which in turn produced Nepali diasporic literature. Modern Nepali poets also started to publish their poems from different parts of the world. Sri Lankan literature has also the diversity in languages and culture since most of the Sri Lankan literature is written in the Sinhala and Tamil language. Few kinds of literature are produced in the English language and the Pali language. Pakistan attained the status of nationhood only after the partition of India in 1947. Though Pakistan does not has a rich tradition in literature, it inherits the qualities found in other South Asian literature as well as English literature. The languages used by Pakistani literature are also diverse and transnational in a way that it used Urdu, English, Punjabi, Seraiki, Balochi, Pushto and Sindhi. Few Pakistani writers have also written in the Persian language thus making it transnational. This leads to the account of considering that Linguistic Heterogeneity and trans-culturalism are prevalent in South Asian Literature.

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